

The Communist

All Power To The Workers!

Vol. I, No. 3

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The Capitalists Challenge You-Workingmen!

Proclamation by the Communist Party of America

MARTIAL law has been declared in Gary, Indiana! Soldiers of the regular army, soldiers who have seen service overseas, who have waded through the blood of their fellows on the battle fields of Europe, as the capitalist press is gloatingly declaring, are now in control.

The army of occupation entered Gary fully equipped. Automatic rifles, hand grenades, machine guns and heavier cannon, cannon that can clear two miles of a city street in a few minutes, as the officer in charge said, these are ready for use in Gary. And the soldiers wear trench helmets made by the workers of Gary!

Why are these soldiers there, workingmen of the United States? What has happened in the City of Steel that requires this murderous equipment for the destruction of human lives?

The workingmen of Gary are engaged in a struggle against the capitalists. They have suffered long. Low wages, long hours of exhausting work in the heat of the steel ovens. Life-rapping toil with no time for home life, this has been their lot.

At last they revolted. Risking suffering and hunger, risking the assault of the brutal bullies of the Steel Trust, who do not even stop at murder, they resorted to the strike to make their masters lighten the conditions of their toil. They organized their power and united dared challenge to a test of strength the great industrial octopus which dominates the steel industry.

Gary is the City of Steel. It was built by the order of the Steel Trust. The influence and control of the Steel Trust extends to every nook and corner of the life of the city. Its spies are everywhere. The local government is its tool and expresses its will. This Steel Trust municipal government forbade the workingmen to show their solidarity by parades and public meetings. It hoped by keeping the workers apart to break their spirit, to give encouragement to the few scabs who were working.

For two weeks the workers submitted. They permitted the Steel Trust government to trample underfoot the democratic rights which they had been so often assured were the heritage of the people of this country. They let the industrial masters demonstrate clearly that not "democracy" but iron-fisted autocracy was, for the workers, the aftermath of the war.

Then these workers broke into spontaneous protest. The mayor, the Steel Trust tool, had forbidden them to meet in public. He had forbidden them to parade through the streets. **But they would meet and would parade.**

They formed in line with five hundred uniformed men, strikers all, at the head of the line and marched through the heart of the city.

This mass action of the workers won. Their mass power conquered. The orders of the mayor became mere rags of paper. Ten thousand workers marched through the heart of the city and in place of upholding the orders of the mayor the militia and police cleared the way for the strikers—became their

servants because they were showing their power.

But capitalism was not done. The Steel Trust does not only have at its beck and call the power of the local government, but the national government, the State, is equally its servants. The workers had won the first skirmish through their mass power. They must be taught a lesson. They must be cowed and thrown back into their former position of abject slaves.

The orders went forth. Soon the long line of truck-loads of regular soldiers were on the way to Gary. The men who the workers had been told a short year ago, were fighting their battle for democracy upon the blood-stained fields of Europe, and whom they had been urged to support by giving the last of their strength to the work of production, these men were coming to teach them "democracy." And with them came their instruments of murder, their automatic rifles, their hand grenades, their machine guns, the cannon that could clear a street two miles long in a few minutes, and the helmets that the workers of Gary had produced. Gary was to be shown how the Czar and Kaiser treated rebellious workingmen.

The National Government, the Capitalist State, had stepped in. The Steel Trust was in danger of being beaten. It might have to submit before the power of the workers. To save itself it brought into the field the instrument forged by the capitalists to uphold their system of exploitation and oppression, the State, which in spite of all its democratic pretensions is but the physical expression of the Dictatorship of the Capitalist Class.

WORKINGMEN OF THE UNITED STATES, THE CAPITALISTS ARE CHALLENGING YOU!

They are demonstrating before your very eyes that the governmental power is theirs, for use against you when you dare strike against the enslavement which they force upon you.

The homes of the workingmen of Gary are being raided, their meetings forbidden, their literature confiscated by the military regime which controls Gary. Martial law is supreme. The instruments to destroy the lives of the workers are ready.

Are you, workingmen of this country, going to submit meekly to the use of military invasion and force to break your strikes? Shall the iron heel rule unchallenged?

This is the hour to rouse the workers.

GATHER IN GREAT MASS MEETINGS. BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF THE UNENLIGHTENED WORKERS THE MEANING OF MARTIAL LAW AT GARY. SHOW THEM THAT IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO STRIKE AGAINST LOW WAGES AND BAD WORKING CONDITIONS BUT THAT THE STRIKE MUST BE DIRECTED AGAINST CAPITALISM.

THE WORKERS MUST CAPTURE THE POWER OF THE STATE. THEY MUST WREST FROM THE CAPITALISTS THE MEANS THROUGH WHICH THE CAPITALIST RULE IS MAINTAINED.

The answer to the Dictatorship of the Capitalists is the Dictatorship of the Workers.

The Communist

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THE WORKER IN STEEL

THE Steel Trust, as presently constituted, was organized in 1902. So conservative a financial authority as Oscar Underwood, in a Senate debate on the war profits tax, stated that the capitalization of United States Steel was fully three times the actual value of the investment. With a billion dollar capitalization, the profits from 1902 to 1914 totalled roundly \$1,500,000,000; that is, about 30% annual return on actual investment, without taking any account of financial juggleries on the stock market and in the merger of new properties, or misleading systems of accounts which conceal profits as operation or interest charges. For 1915 the profit returns ran close to \$100,000,000, and for 1916 \$294,026,564. The profit rate for 1916 was probably 50%, if real property values are considered. For 1917, \$478,204,343, an acknowledged rate of 24.9%, a return of likely more than ever went into the actual corporation investment. After the war tax was paid, there was still \$244,738,903 on hand for distribution, or swelling of surplus. About the same level of profits was maintained for 1918. The total profits (after deducting war taxes) since 1902 would now exceed \$2,500,000,000, which can be estimated safely as 600% on the real investment in 17 years, or an annual return of 35%.

The "independents" show similar profits, especially during the war period. The Bethlehem profits jumped from little over \$5,000,000 for 1913 to over \$60,000,000 for 1917; Republic Iron & Steel Co. from \$3,000,000 (1913) to \$15,000,000 (1916); and so of one steel concern after another, until the addition of profits becomes a dizzy process.

During the first decade after the 1902 re-organization, production increased with a lesser force and a lesser total of wages: the output per man went up, the cost per ton of production was greatly reduced. Wages stood still.

The Bureau of Labor made a special study of the iron and steel industry for 1910. Only 1 worker out of 40 was getting over 50c per hour. For a 12-hour day half the workers were paid from \$1.68 to \$2.16. Few steel workers are steadily employed (one-fourth time off is the average). Out of a total of 172,000 adult males employed by U. S. Steel in 1910, 8% received less than \$500 per annum, 60% less than \$750, 85% less than \$1000.

Nearly half the steel workers (1910) put in 72 hours, or 6 days of 12 hours, with extra stretches of 20 to 30 hours. In the blast furnace and other departments, 20% of the entire force, the men put in 84 hours or more per week. The percentage working the 7-day week is as high today as in 1910. The time schedule is as follows: 10 hours for 12 days, then 14 hours for 12 nights, with two continuous shifts of 24 hours when the change is made from day to night, and 2 periods of 24 hours off in the four weeks.

That there is nothing inherent in the industry which requires these hours is conclusively settled by the resolution adopted in April, 1907, by the finance committee of the steel corporation in favor of the 6-day week. Most of the subsidiary companies failed to act on this recommendation, for fear of cutting into dividends. Under pressure of public attacks an investigation was made by a committee of stockholders in 1911. This committee reported: "We are of the opinion that a 12-hour day of labor, followed continuously by any group of men for any considerable number of years means a decreasing of the efficiency and lessening of the vigor and vitality of such men."

The Chicago Tribune recently printed an extract from a speech by William B. Dickson, First Vice-President of U. S. Steel, delivered May 27, 1910, as follows: "It is my deliberate judgment, after almost thirty years of continuous connection with the industry, the early part of which was passed in manual labor in the mills, that the present conditions, which necessitate the employment of the same individual workman twelve hours a day for seven days a week, are a reproach to our great industry and should not in this enlightened age be longer tolerated."

Nearly a decade has gone by, presumably adding to the world's enlightenment. . . .

During the war about a million additional workers came under the 8-hour day standard. Under pressure of the war production, adjustments were made in wages to meet the higher prices, but these adjustments lagged behind the rise in prices. As to the propaganda now being carried on about high wages during recent months, the national scale set by the War Labor Board for the hundreds of thousands of shipyard workers, (awards concluded October 24, 1918), will serve as a test, since the same general class of labor is involved and about the same localities. Out of 189 rates

scheduled, one exceeded a dollar an hour. The rate for laborers in the Southern districts, 36c, and in the Eastern, Central and Pacific districts, 46c. There were 67 rates (over one-third of the list) under 60c; 137 rates, 70c and under; and only 39 rates, covering the basic crafts, at 80c and over.

A War Labor Board award (August 21, 1918) affecting the Pollack Steel Co., at Cincinnati, also tests the war rates of pay. Out of 47 rates specified, there was 1 each at \$1.05, 92c, 89c, 86c, 73c; 2 at 72c and 2 at 70c. Under 70c to 60c, 7 classifications; 10 others down to 40c, and 21 grades at 40c. In all cases, 5c an hour higher on night shifts. The highly skilled workers in steel are in decided minority. The bonus awards likewise affect only a very small percentage.

There is no need to add statistics about prices in comparison with wages. The sub-human existence of the worker in steel and of his family is more aggravated today than it was in 1910, when it shocked the conscience even of the company officials and stockholders. A very recent study by the Bureau of Labor shows that it now requires an income of at least \$1800 a year for the proper nourishment of a family of two adults and three children. For June, 1919, 82 establishments in steel and iron, with 154,395 employees, showed a payroll for a half-month of \$9,554,914. This figures a monthly average of less than \$125, without separating the workers into managerial, technical, and semi-skilled groups. The recent reports show decreasing employment, adding to the off-time.

The rest of the story is told officially in the Monthly Labor Review under "Changes in Wage Rates", as follows:

During the period February 15 to March 15, 1919, a decrease of 17½%, affecting 40% of the force, was made in one plant, and a 17% decrease was reported by another plant, but no information was given as to the number of employees affected. Decreases of 10% went into effect in three establishments and affected 40% of the men in one, 25% in another, but the third plant failed to give any further data, while approximately 68½% and 40% of the employees were decreased about 10% in two other plants. Seven establishments made decreases ranging from 5% to 9%, affecting 37½% of the employees in one plant, the tonnage men in another, about 1% of the employees in the third and 33.1-34% of the force in the fourth plant, while the decreases in the remaining establishments affected 20% of the men in one, 50% in another and 66.2-3% of the employees in the seventh establishment. The tonnage men in one plant were decreased, but no data was given as to the percentage or number affected.—(May Monthly Review, U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, p. 185.)

March 15 to April 15: The tonnage men, about 5% of the force, were decreased about 8% in one establishment. A decrease of 6%, affecting the entire force, was made by one plant.—(June Review, p. 128.)

April 15 to May 15: A number of decreases were reported in iron and steel, many of which were in accordance with the rules of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. The entire force in two plants was decreased 25%. The rolling mill piece work rates in one plant were reduced 18%. About one-third of the employees in one plant and 15% the force in another plant were decreased 17½%. The 65% bonus, affecting all the employees in one mill, with the exception of the bar mill piece workers, was reduced to 40%. A decrease of approximately 14%, affecting about 50% of the employees, was reported by one plant. About 45% of the employees in one plant received a decrease of about 12%; and a reduction in rates, averaging 11%, and affecting 40% of the men, was made by another plant.

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Report of Louis C. Fraina, International Secretary of the Communist Party of America, to the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

As International Secretary, I make application for admission of the Communist Party of America to the Bureau of the Communist International as a major party.

The Communist Party, organized September 1, 1919, with approximately 55,000 members, issues directly out of a split in the old Socialist Party. The new party represents more than half the membership of the old party.

1. Socialist Party, Socialist Labor Party, I. W. W.

The Socialist Party was organized in 1901, of a merger of two elements: 1) seceders from the Socialist Labor Party, like Morris Hillquit, who split away in 1899 largely because of the S. L. P.'s uncompromising endeavors to revolutionize the trades unions; 2) the Social Democratic Party of Wisconsin, a purely middle-class liberal party tinged with Socialism, of which Victor L. Berger was representative.

The Socialist Labor Party, organized definitely in 1890, acted on the basis of the uncompromising proletarian class struggle. Appearing at a period when class relations were still in state of flux, when the ideology of independence, created by the free lands of the West, still persisted among the workers, the Socialist Labor Party emphasized the class struggle and the class character of the proletarian movement. Realizing the peculiar problems of the American movement, the Socialist Labor Party initiated a consistent campaign for revolutionary unionism and against the dominant craft unionism of the American Federation of Labor, which, representing the skilled workers—"aristocracy of labor"—sabotaged every radical impulse of the working class. The S. L. P. was a party of revolutionary Socialism, against which opportunist elements revolted.

The Spanish-American War was an immature expression of American Imperialism, initiated by the requirements of monopolistic Capitalism. A movement of protest developed in the middle class, which, uniting with the previous impulses of petty bourgeois and agrarian radicalism, expressed itself in a campaign of anti-Imperialism. There was a general revival of the ideology of liberal democracy. The Socialist Party expressed one phase of this liberal development; it adopted fundamentally a non-class policy, directing its appeal to the middle class, to the farmers, to every temporary sentiment of discontent, for a program of government ownership of the trusts. The Socialist Party, particularly, discouraged all action for revolutionary unionism, becoming a bulwark of the Gompertz A. F. of L. and its reactionary officials, "the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class." This typical party of opportunist Socialism considered strikes and unions as of minor and transitory importance, instead of developing their revolutionary implications; parliamentarism was considered the important thing, legislative reforms and the use of the bourgeois state the means equally for waging the class struggle and for establishing the Socialist Republic. The Socialist Party was essentially a party of State Capitalism, an expression of the dominant moderate Socialism of the old International.

But industrial concentration proceeded feverishly, developing monopoly and the typical conditions of Imperialism. Congress—parliamentarism—assumed an aspect of futility as Imperialism developed and the Federal government became a centralized autocracy. The industrial proletariat, expropriated of skill by the machine process and concentrated in the basic industry, initiated new means of struggle. The general conditions of imperialistic Capitalism developed new tactical concepts—mass action in Europe and industrial unionism in the United States, the necessity for extra-parliamentary means to conquer the power of the state.

The old craft unionism was more and more incapable of struggling successfully against concentrated Capitalism. Out of this general situation arose the In-

dustrial Workers of the World, organized in 1905—an event of the greatest revolutionary importance. The I. W. W. indicted craft unionism as reactionary and not in accord with the concentration of industry, which wipes out differences of skill and craft. The I. W. W. urged industrial unionism, that is to say, a unionism organized according to industrial division: all workers in one industry, regardless of particular crafts, to unite in one union; and all industrial unions to unite in the general organization, thereby paralleling the industrial structure of modern Capitalism. Industrial unionism was urged not simply for the immediate struggle of the workers, but as the revolutionary means for the workers to assume control of industry.

Previous movements of revolutionary unionism, such as the Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance and the American Labor Union, united in the I. W. W. The Socialist Labor Party was a vital factor in the organization of the I. W. W., Daniel De Leon formulating the theoretical concepts of industrial unionism. Industrial unionism and the conception of overthrowing the parliamentary state, substituting it with an industrial administration based upon the industrial unions, was related by De Leon to the general theory of Marxism.

The Socialist Party repeatedly rejected resolutions endorsing the I. W. W. and industrial unionism, although supporting I. W. W. strikes by money and publicity. The Socialist Party supported the A. F. of L. and craft unionism, rejecting the revolutionary implications of industrial unionism—the necessity of extra-parliamentary action to conquer the power of the state.

After the panic of 1907, there was an awakening of the American proletariat. New and more proletarian elements joined the Socialist Party. Industrial unionism developed an enormous impetus, and violent tactical disputes arose in the party, particularly in the Northwest where the new unionism was a vital factor. These disputes came to a climax at the Socialist Party Convention of 1912. The tactical issue of industrial unionism was comprised in the problem of whether parliamentarism alone constituted political action, whether parliamentarism alone could accomplish the revolution or whether extra-parliamentary means were indispensable for the conquest of political power. The Socialist Party Convention, by a large majority, emasculated the Marxian conception of political action, limiting it to parliamentarism; an amendment to the party constitution defined political action as "participation in elections for public office and practical legislative and administrative work along the lines of the Socialist Party platform." That year the Socialist Party, by means of a petty bourgeois liberal campaign, polled more than 900,000 votes for its presidential candidate; but thousands of militant proletarians seceded from the party in disgust at the rejection of revolutionary industrial unionism, while William D. Haywood, representative of the industrialists in the party, was recalled on referendum vote as a member of the National Executive Committee.

The organization of the Progressive Party in 1912 made "progressivism" a political issue. The Socialist Party adapted itself to this "progressivism." But this progressivism was the last flickering expression of radical democracy; Theodore Roosevelt harnessed progressivism to Imperialism and State Capitalism. A new social alignment arose, requiring new Socialist tactics.

2. The War, the Socialist Party and the Bolshevik Revolution.

After 1912, the party officially proceeded on its peaceful petty bourgeois way. Then—the war, and the collapse of the International. The official representatives of the Socialist Party either justified the betrayal of Socialism in Europe, or else were acquiescently silent, while issuing liberal appeals to "humanity."

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Report of Louis C. Fraina, International Secretary of the Communist Party of America, to the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

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As the war continued and the betrayal of Socialism became more apparent, and particularly as the American comrades learned of the revolutionary minority elements in the European movement, there was a revolutionary awakening in the Socialist Party, strengthened by new accessions of proletarian elements to the party. The first organized expression of this awakening was the formation of the Socialist Propaganda League in Boston, in 1916, issuing a weekly organ which afterwards became "The New International," with Louis C. Fraina as Editor and S. J. Rutgers as Associate. The League emphasized the necessity of new proletarian tactics in the epoch of Imperialism. In April, 1917, was started "The Class Struggle," a magazine devoted to International Socialism. In the State of Michigan, the anti-reformists captured the Socialist Party, and carried on a non-reformist agitation, particularly in "The Proletarian."

The enormous exports of war munitions, the development of large reserves of surplus capital, and the assumption of a position of world power financially by American Capitalism forced the United States into the war. There was an immediate revolutionary upsurge in the Socialist Party. The St. Louis Convention of the Party, in April, 1917, adopted a militant declaration against the war, forced upon a reluctant bureaucracy by the revolutionary membership. But this bureaucracy sabotaged the declaration. It adopted a policy of petty bourgeois pacifism, uniting with the liberal People's Council, which subsequently accepted President Wilson's "14 points" as its own program. Moreover, there was a minority on the National Executive Committee in favor of the war; in August, 1918, the vote in the N. E. C. stood 4 to 4 on repudiation of the St. Louis Declaration. The Socialist Party's only representative in Congress, Meyer London, openly supported the war and flouted the party's declaration against the war; but he was neither disciplined nor expelled, in fact secured a renomination. Morris Hillquit accepted the declaration against the war, but converted it into bourgeois pacifism, being a prominent member of the People's Council. In reply to a question whether, if a member of Congress, he would have voted in favor of war, Hillquit answered ("The New Republic," December 1, 1917): "If I had believed that our participation would shorten the world war and force a better, more democratic and more durable peace, I should have favored the measure, regardless of the cost and sacrifices of America. My opposition to our entry into the war was based upon the conviction that it would prolong the disastrous conflict without compensating gains to humanity." This was a complete abandonment of the class struggle and the Socialist conception of war. The war was a test of the Socialist Party and proved it officially a party of vicious centrism.

The Russian Revolution was another test of the party. Officially, the Socialist Party was for the Menshevik policy and enthusiastic about Kerensky; while the New York "Call," Socialist Party daily newspaper in New York City, editorially characterized Comrade Lenin and the Bolsheviks, in June, 1917, as "anarchists." The party officially was silent about the November Revolution; it was silent about the Soviet Government's proposal for an armistice on all fronts, although the National Executive Committee of the Party met in December and should have acted vigorously, mobilizing the party for the armistice. But the revolutionary membership responded, its enthusiasm for the Bolshevik Revolution being magnificent. This enthusiasm forced the party representatives to speak in favor of the Bolsheviks, but always in general terms capable of "interpretation." After the Brest-Litovsk peace, there was a sentiment among the party representatives for war against Germany "to save the Russian Revolution."

The Socialist Party carried on an active campaign against intervention in Russia. However, this campaign did not emphasize the revolutionary implications of the situation in Russia, as making mandatory the reconstruction of the Socialist movement. A campaign against intervention must proceed as a phase of the general campaign to develop revolutionary proletarian action.

3. The Left Wing Develops.

During 1918 the Socialist Party was in ferment. The membership was more and more coming to think in revolutionary terms. Then came the armistice and the German Revolution. The response was immediate. On November 7, 1918, a Communist Propaganda League was organized in Chicago. On November 9 Local Boston, Socialist Party, started to issue an agitational paper, "The Revolutionary Age." This paper immediately issued a call to the party for the adoption of revolutionary Communist tactics, emphasizing that the emergence of the proletariat into the epoch of the world revolution made absolutely imperative the reconstruction of Socialism. In New York City, in February 1919, there was organized the Left Wing Section of the Socialist Party. Its Left Wing Manifesto and Program was adopted by local after local of the Socialist Party, the Left Wing acquiring a definite expression. The Left Wing secured the immediate adhesion of the Lettish, Russian, Lithuanian, Polish, Ukrainian, South Slavic, Hungarian and Estonian Federations of the party, representing about 25,000 members. The official organs of the Federations did splendid work for the Left Wing.

In January, 1919, the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party decided to send delegates to the Berne Congress of the Great Betrayal. This action was characteristic of the social-patriot and centrist bent of the party administration. There was an immediate protest from the membership, the Left Wing using the Berne Congress as again emphasizing the necessity for the revolutionary reconstruction of Socialism. In March we received a copy of the call issued by the Communist Party of Russia for an international congress to organize a new International. "The Revolutionary Age" was the first to print the call, yielding it immediate adhesion; while the Left Wing Section of New York City transmitted credentials to S. J. Rutgers to represent it at the congress. Local Boston initiated a motion for a referendum to affiliate the party with the Third International; this was thrown out by the national administration of the party on a technicality; but after much delay another local succeeded in securing a referendum. (The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of the Third International.)

The Left Wing was now, although still without a definite organization, a formidable power in the Socialist Party. Previously all revolts in the party were isolated or consisted purely of theoretical criticism; now there was this theoretical criticism united with a developing organization expression. There was not, as yet, any general conception of the organization of a new party; it was a struggle for power within the Socialist Party.

About this time the call for the new Socialist Party elections was issued. The Left Wing decided upon its own candidates. The elections constituted an overwhelming victory for the Left Wing. The national administration of the Socialist Party, realizing the impending disaster, decided upon desperate measures. Branch after branch and local after local of the party, which had adopted the Left Wing Manifesto and Program, was expelled. Morris Hillquit issued a declaration that the breach in the party had become irreconcilable, and that the only solution was to split, each faction organizing its own party. At first the expulsions were on a small scale; then, the danger be-

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Steel and Life.

A few days ago was overheard a conversation between two business men on board a train traveling through the steel towns adjacent to Chicago. One was apparently the manager of some chemical corporation, the other, one of the directors.

This was the first day of the strike. All were scanning the horizon to read the news from the smoke stacks. The comments were the usual ones: that the men didn't want to strike; that it was all the doing of scheming leaders; that Fitzpatrick was out to replace Gompers; that the rank and file were far more conservative than the leaders, etc.

The train went through Gary, Hammond, South Chicago. The business men turned their talk from the strike to a building scheme which interested them because of the housing problem in connection with one or other of their plants. The train happened to be stalled along the rows of miserable cottages in Hammond and South Chicago. "One thing we have neglected," said the manager, "is the problem of housing these foreign workers."

Then, somehow momentarily losing the perspective of business: "Well, by God, if I had to live in one of these shacks, I guess I'd go on a strike myself." But the thought of going on a strike was a too violent bit of heresy, so he added, after a few seconds, "Or I would get myself a farm." Then the business discussion was resumed.

Those who live in these shacks have long ago thought about living where there is space, fresh air, green fields.

Ben Hecht reported some conversations with strikers in the Chicago Daily News. The following is an excerpt:

"'I work 14 hours a day,' he said. 'I never see my kids, I never see my missus. I go to work at 5 o'clock. It's dark at 5 o'clock. The kids is sleeping at 5 o'clock. I come home when it's 7 o'clock in the night. It's dark at 7 o'clock. The kids is going to sleep again. I say to the missus, 'I'm tired; let's go to bed.' So I go to bed. I don't see nobody. Now I'm striking, I see the kids, and maybe I go to a show.'

"'Why don't you take a day off sometimes?' I asked.

"'What you talk about?' said the man. 'I work four years without taking a day off. If I take a day off the boss hire somebody else, and I lose my job. That's what the boss tell me, so I work.'

Steel workers are "hunkies." They can be thus impersonalized in droves because, first, they are heavy laborers, and because, second, they are foreigners. Seven out of ten are actually foreign born. The other three happened to be born American citizens.

It is reported that many are planning to try the old country again, that thousands are leaving now. No doubt the figures are false, part of the propaganda to impress the foreign character of the strikers. When it comes to paying for the trip, the family men must be largely counted out. But some are leaving, and

some want to leave, to be replaced by black Americans or by newly arriving foreigners.

Black, white, yellow, brown, the steel workers are all foreigners. It is not agreeable to be constantly looked down upon as a foreigner. So these workers search out those of the same nativity, and they live and work close together, speaking the mother tongue. Then there is the longing for the land where this tongue is not foreign, where the steel worker of this country may be laborer or peasant, but not "hunkie."

This is a passing phase. Industry is already well advanced along the lines of internationality. The class call, with its challenge to the future, drowns out the weak call to the past, to the relaxation of a homeland. There is only one way: workers can no longer be foreigners to other workers; there must be class union against class exploitation.

One of the newspapers referred to the various foreign groups, and then to the balance as "hybrids" who, "for the want of anything more definite," were called "Americans"!

The American proletariat is beginning to sense the fact from his day to day experience that the proletariat—the mass of workers in the basic industries—is without nationality. It is only a matter of place of work. The tables of figures show that over one-third of the entire American population is foreign or born of foreign parentage.

The foreign workers in steel suffer the stings of the despised foreign caste. A few acquire the snobbishness of insistent Americanism. Those who attain class consciousness and align themselves definitely in the revolutionary class conflict become patient; they accept placidly the snobberies of fellow workers or of the petty officialdom. They see the proletariat of tomorrow—and of today, in Russia!

In the magic age of steel, with its wonders of expanded industry, it is steel which exacts a toll of life sacrifice such as was not dreamt of by all the angry gods of all the ages.

One of the steel superintendents grimly remarked that the making of steel was no tea party. But men have never shrunk away from hard tasks or great hazards. The reckless toll of needless deaths, of devitalized manhood, of starved childhood in the ugly steel towns—this has not been the price of steel, but only of the gigantic steel fortunes, the imperial fortunes of the Carnegies, Fricks, Bakers, Schwabs, Morgans and the others.

The strike is not against the making of steel, with all its hazards. The revolution is not against the making of steel. It is against the making of steel profits.

The daily papers carry one statement after another by steel officials about the high wages of their workers, propaganda statements which, when they have any truth at all, are based on a few exceptional piece-rate and bonus cases. These papers never mention the war profits of steel. There is much flourish of the paltry

total of steel stocks held by the workers, small accumulations of savings which mean nothing more than a span of two or three months against starvation, nothing more than the beggarly allowance in present pay against the always imminent layoff. The Liberty Bonds of U. S. Steel, and of Bethlehem, are never mentioned by contrast.

It took a terrific lot of vitality to earn the wages saved in these one or two hundred dollars in stocks or bonds. Schwab frankly told the British Premier that it was taken for granted that war orders meant war profits. That was the business genius for which Bethlehem stockholders were paid manifold millions. The business world nodded approval. Such is the business of war—and the war of business. Against life!

The steel strike is the cry of life against steel-despotism. But it is yet a timid, hesitant cry of revolt. It is only the cry for merciful servitude.

The owners of steel could grant all the immediate strike demands and yet go on increasing their profits. It is the unionism of these workers that must be defeated. Because there is something ominous for the future in the organization of these workers and their attainment of consciousness of group and class power.

The revolution is the issue in the steel strike. It is a palpable lie that any considerable number of the strikers have the revolutionary consciousness; and it is ludicrous that the A. F. of L. officialdom, of any stripe, entertains conceptions of this strike outside the regular formulas of trade unionism. But a militant demand for human existence on the part of the workers in steel is a first epoch in the proletarian revolution in America.

The revolution is the issue because it will be learned, in defeat or victory alike, that out of the furnaces and hearth fires of steel can no longer come the sheets and slabs and rods and rails of profit-extracting industry if the worker in steel is to have the life benefits of steel. The law of profit is the law of life deprivation. Steel cannot serve both profits and life.

The revolution is to make steel serve life.


A unionism which breaks down the caste system against the unskilled and semi-skilled, a unionism which breaks down the caste division among workers against those of different color and nativity, a unionism which cannot stop at the old craft separation of workers—that is the unionism in steel against which the powerful Steel Trust is hurling its great power. Such unionism too clearly visualizes the working class array which Capitalism itself inevitably creates for its own destruction.

Capitalism is doomed by its inherent law of profits. The cry is for more production, more production. This is the escape from the vicious circle of increasing prices which keeps the worker's living from advancing! Vain delusion. As if the greater production meant anything

(Continued on page 6.)

The Shop Crafts Revolt.

By H. M. Wicks

 OUR hundred delegates from the United States and Canada, representing various railway shop crafts, held a three-day convention in Pulaski Hall, Chicago, Sept. 25, 26 and 27. All the crafts employed in the railway shops, consisting of carmen, boiler-makers, machinists, sheet metal workers, electrical workers, maintenance of way men and even the clerks, were represented by delegates.

The purpose of the convention was to devise means of dealing with the reactionary officials of their organizations who had refused to call a strike for wage increases for journeymen from 65 cents to 85 cents an hour and for helpers from 45 to 65 cents an hour, after over 90 per cent of the organized crafts employed in this industry had voted for the strike. The officials of the unions entered into an agreement with the government for an increase of four cents per hour for a period of three months. At the end of that time the proposition was to be again brought before the unions for action. The three months' clause was inserted in order to give President Wilson "sufficient time to reduce the cost of living."

Many stormy discussions took place on the floor, and during the first two days there was much talk of secession from the craft organizations and the formation of a union representing the federated crafts. Finally a resolution was presented for the establishment of a dual organization, which was defeated by a very narrow margin. The debate on this resolution brought out the fact that most of the delegates were opposed to the reactionary A. F. of L., but when it came to any definite solution of the problem of dealing with that machine there was no unanimity of opinion. Although the convention was presided over by men who had been expelled from the organizations affiliated with the A. F. of L., the principal argument against a dual organization seemed to be that as that organization had been a shelter for them in the past, they should not destroy it, but endeavor to "repair" it; so it would be a more efficient "shelter" in the future. Speeches comparing the A. F. of L. to a house with a leaky roof, and suggestions as to how to proceed to repair the roof, drew applause from most of the delegates on the floor.

After the attempt to put through the dual organization resolution failed the convention became more and more conservative, and the speeches, which had been of a mildly radical tinge in the early sessions, took on the character of any pure and simple craft union convention. Their one grievance was finally disposed of by passing a resolution to call a strike for November 1, in case their demands were not granted.

Conspicuous among those who assisted the convention toward reaction were a number of Socialist Party workers, under the leadership of one John Collins of Chicago, representing the New York Central Shop. Instead of trying to formulate a program of revolutionary organization, this Socialist introduced a resolution asking that a message be sent to the president of the railway employees'

department at Washington asking his immediate resignation. This idiotic motion was tabled amid the laughter of the few men there who understood the class struggle.

A number of resolutions were introduced, and on Saturday the resolution committee combined them into one resolution embodying the following demands:

1. That the rank and file be given the right to vote on the election of officers of the American Federation of Labor.
2. The right to decide its policy by popular vote.
3. The immediate resignation of all labor representatives from government commissions.
4. The immediate release of all conscientious objectors and political prisoners.
5. Withdrawal of all military, financial and moral support to any faction in Russian affairs.
6. Nationalization of all vital industries under the Plumb plan.
7. The inauguration of a national co-operative system of distribution.
8. A policy of economic group action on the political field.
9. The formation of a national political party representative of the two great economic groups of farmers and workers.

The representatives of the labor politicians who are busily engaged in the organization of the Labor Party were there and secured the endorsement of their party. The co-called Socialist delegates put up no argument against it, some of them even favoring it.

On Saturday morning, after endorsing the strike of the steel workers and the policemen's strike at Boston, a communication was read from the Triple Alliance of the transport workers, railway workers and miners of Great Britain, which offered a wonderful opportunity for revolutionary propaganda and education had there been anyone on the floor capable of presenting the arguments. The communication declared that the organized workers of Great Britain had heretofore devoted themselves exclusively "to economic and industrial action of the workers," but that their recent experiences had taught them the necessity for political organization against the state of the ruling class. They illustrated their political activity by calling attention to preparations being made for a mass strike against intervention in Russia and against conscription. The communication concluded by expressing the hope that the workers of this country would not permit America to be the stronghold of capitalist reaction.

The reactionaries were immediately on the floor, and stated that, while they endorsed such action for Britain, there was no necessity for such action in this land of democracy. All the speeches on the communication from Britain emphasized the fact that the railway shop crafts were not in opposition to the policy of the government, and that they were all

patriotic citizens who would never think of using their industrial organizations for political purposes. The chairman of the resolutions committee recommended the endorsement of the demands of the Triple Alliance in Britain, and added that "those demands are not the demands of this body." The convention finally agreed to send greetings to the strikers of Great Britain.

The only other subject that aroused a great deal of heated discussion was the resolution asking for amnesty for political and industrial prisoners. A number of reactionaries contended the endorsement of such a resolution would be an insult to the "patriotic Americans who fought in France," and that a real American labor organization should be in favor of long terms in prison for those who "obstructed the operations of the government during the war." A few mild mannered radicals secured the floor and spoke in opposition to that sentiment, but not one of them mentioned the possibilities of using the mass power of the workers for the liberation of political prisoners.

The convention was a disappointment to many who expected firm and intelligent action against the reactionary policy of the A. F. of L., and it was clearly apparent that in principles and tactics it was absolutely dominated by typical trades unionists, who were temporarily disgruntled at the action of certain groups of their officials.

Steel and Life.

(Continued from page 5)

more than the greater accumulation of capital, which means the ever greater demand for tributes of profits! Because if the greater production were consumed by the workers, without exaction of profit, that would be for capital to commit suicide. There is only one way to end the vicious circle, and that way is to end the taking of profits.

An organized working class is arising, conscious of its destiny to rule society. Its demands for the fullness of life must quickly become the demand for a workers' industrialism, freed from the profit cancer.

It is out of the immediate struggles, like the steel strike here and the railroad strike in England, that this power and understanding of the workers must develop. There is a manhood and courage on the part of the strikers which asserts itself against tremendously favored opposition.

The unrest of today is the birth pangs of the new civilization. There is yet to be an Age of Steel, when the ruddy ore shall be converted into the building of the dwellings of free workmen.

The carriers of the new civilization are the "hunkies" who live in the miserable shacks, and who work from dark to dark. The truth will lead them out of the darkness into the sunlight, the truth of their class power and of their way to freedom.

The Party Organization

C. E. Ruthenberg Executive Secretary 1219 Blue Island Avenue, Chicago.

The Organization Fund.

The Lettish Branch No. 1 of New York City sent in \$100.00 for the Organization Fund of the Communist Party. That is the kind of response that will bring into existence a strong organization in the briefest possible time. It is the membership that is now in the Communist Party that in the past has shown that it does not consider membership in a revolutionary organization a matter to be taken lightly, but willingness to work and sacrifice. That is the spirit which brought the prompt response from the Lettish Branch of New York and which brought a remittance from the Russian Branch of Pittsburg within three days from the time our subscription list was mailed.

The Baltimore City Central Committee reports over \$40.00 collected for the fund and the South Slavic Branch of Ziegler has already sent in a remittance of \$20.25.

An "Organization Fund" of \$25,000 will enable the National Organization to immediately launch a propaganda and organization campaign that will build up a united organization of a hundred thousand members before the next convention of the party takes place.

We are living in the Revolutionary Era. Our work of organization must be done quickly if we are to play the part that is rightly ours in world revolution.

Every Communist Branch, every Communist party member, must help. Circulate the subscription lists. Make the "Organization Fund" grow and the party will grow.

The Cleveland Test.

THE decision of Local Cuyahoga County, (Cleveland) to join the Communist Party was a matter of greater moment than the brief note we were able to insert in last week's issue indicated. Cleveland furnished a test of the strength of the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party when the argument on both sides is thoroughly presented.

Alfred Wagenknecht, Executive Secretary of the Communist Labor Party is a member of Local Cuyahoga County, as is A. Bilan, member of the Executive Committee of that organization. Both were delegates to the Chicago conventions from that Local. The Cleveland delegation at Chicago split, four going with the bolting delegates into the Communist Labor Party and one, C. E. Ruthenberg, going to the Communist Party.

Four delegates returned to Cleveland to fight for the C. L. P. Branches were visited by these delegates and literature distributed. At the convention these four delegates were given an equal opportunity to present their case. The result was an all but unanimous decision against the C. L. P. and for the Communist Party.

The delegates in the Cleveland convention had all the facts. They heard all the arguments that the advocates of the C. L. P. could present, but yet only three delegates, one of them Wagenknecht himself, voted to affiliate with that organization. Could there be a more overwhelming repudiation of the C. L. P.?

The convention went further. Wagenknecht, after being thus badly beaten, offered a resolution placing the convention on record as favoring a unity conference between the C. L. P. and the C. E. Ruthenberg offered an amendment urging unity of all who are united for Communist principles through their joining the Communist Party. The Communist Labor Party case was so poor that it could not even make a decent showing in support of its unity proposal, for the amendment urging unity in the Communist Party was again overwhelmingly adopted.

This practically unanimous repudiation of the Wagenknecht party by his own local is being duplicated wherever both sides are presented to locals that are Communist in principle.

Erie German Branch.

The revolt against the effort of the Executive Committee of the German Federation to force the branches of that organization into the Communist Labor Party is extending, the latest branch to join the Communist Party being the Erie, Pa. organization. When the returns are all in the majority of the membership of the German Federation will be found lined up with the other revolutionary workers in the Communist Party.

A Communist Party central committee has also been organized at Erie.

Philadelphia Lines Up.

This is the word from Philadelphia: "The membership of the expelled Local Philadelphia, Socialist Party, consisting of 30 branches and 2,500 members in good standing, hereby applies for a charter as Local Philadelphia, Communist Party." The letter goes on to say: "There are hundreds in this city who are waiting the opportunity to join the Communist Local. The spirit of the membership here is superb. We are looking forward to the receipt of the charter as the signal for launching our campaign of education and organization."

Cleveland and Philadelphia, two locals with 2,500 members each, in one week.

The branches of Baltimore have organized their City Central Committee and applied for a charter as Local Baltimore.

Polish Branches are sending in their applications for charters in bunches.

The Lithuanian Federation at its conventions in Brooklyn voted solidly for affiliation with the Communist Party. The Federation decided to move its printing plant to Chicago, where it will be available for printing the Communist Party papers and literature.

Thirteen former members of Local New Bremen, Ohio, have sent in an application for a charter.

The Evanston, Ill. branch has joined with fifty new members.

The North-Side German Branch of Chicago has been organized with fifteen members.

The Connecticut State Convention decided unanimously for affiliation with the party.

A Pittsburgh ward branch with seventy-five members in good standing asks for information about how to obtain a charter.

The first Italian Branch of the Communist Party has been chartered in Beloit, Wis., and another branch is in the process of being organized in Pennsylvania.

Milwaukee, Too.

Milwaukee, the former stronghold of Moderate Socialism is no longer to enjoy that distinction. The Communists of Milwaukee are building a strong organization. A City Central Committee has been organized and the dubious distinction enjoyed by that city in the past will soon be wiped out by Communist propaganda and organization work.

New Party Branches.

Charter applications for new branches are ready for distribution. Seven persons who are in agreement with the constitution and program of the party may form a branch. If you can build an organization in your city write for a charter application to the address above.

A Propaganda Suggestion.

The distribution of literature is the most effective form of propaganda. The Communist Party will rely upon this method of reaching the workers as the major weapon to enlighten and organize the workers for Communist principles.

In the past the work of selling papers and pamphlets has been the work of one man, the literature agent. The entire membership must be mobilized for this work in the future.

Try this plan in your branch: Buy a hundred Communist Party pamphlets—the Manifesto, Program, Constitution and Report to the International is a good pamphlet to start with—give each member five copies to sell at your next meeting. Buy a hundred copies of "The Communist" and get them out in the same manner.

Every branch member comes in contact with workers who will buy literature and should be given the opportunity to assist in selling pamphlets and papers. Organize your branch for this work and you will be carrying on a campaign that will bring big results.

The Literature Department.

A new pamphlet each week! That will be the program of the party during the next month or two. The first pamphlet containing the Manifesto and Program, Constitution and Report to the International, is already being shipped out.

The second is in the hands of the printer. It will be called "Communist Party and Socialist Party" and will contain a discussion of the differences between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party based upon the experience of the workers in this country.

Other pamphlets will follow quickly.

This splendid work in creating a Communist literature has been made possible by the Russian comrades of Chicago, who loaned the organization over \$2,000 in order that it might begin publication of its literature at once. There is the spirit that must be the basis of the Bolshevik movement in this country.

Watch for the announcement of future pamphlets and leaflets.

Northwest Side Branch No. 1.

Organized in Chicago.

At the 28th Ward Headquarters, Tuesday evening, September 23, was organized Northwest Side Branch No. 1 of the Communist Party. The 28th Ward Branch of the Socialist Party had already reorganized itself as the Debs Club, and now the Debs Club has become a branch of the Communist Party.

It is noteworthy that Comrade Karl F. M. Sandberg, who presided at this meeting, was one of the delegates in the Communist Labor Party Convention, held at the same time as the Communist Party Convention. Comrade Sandberg gave his support to the move to join the Communist Party.

Comrade Joseph Van Reet was elected Secretary of the new branch. Meetings are set for Tuesday evenings. Applications for membership will be received from all residents of the Northwest Side until a City Central is organized and makes other arrangements. The meeting place is at 2519 W. Fullerton Ave., and the Secretary's address is 2022 St. Paul Ave.

The action of this meeting is expected to carry the endorsement of practically all the 90 members of the old 28th Ward Branch, making this the first Ward Branch to come into the Communist Party in Chicago, as it was the first Ward Branch to take the Left Wing position as an organization.

The plan is to have this organization serve as a temporary nucleus for the reorganization of the old party on the Northwest Side.

Report of Louis C. Fraina, International Secretary of the Communist Party of America, to the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

(Continued from Page 4)

coming more acute, the national administration of the party acted. The National Executive Committee met in May determined to "purge" the party of the Left Wing. The N. E. C. was brutal and direct in its means: **it refused to recognize the results of the elections**, declaring them illegal because of "frauds." It issued a call for an emergency national convention on August 30, which was to decide the validity of the elections, meanwhile appointing an "investigating committee." But in order to insure that the convention would "act right," the N. E. C. suspended from the Party the Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Hungarian, South Slavic, Lettish, and Lithuanian Federations, and the Socialist Party of Michigan State. In all, the N. E. C. suspended 40,000 members from the party—a deliberate, brazen move to control the election of delegates to the convention.

The charge of "fraud" was an easily detected camouflage. The elections were so overwhelmingly in favor of the Left Wing candidates as to prove the charge of fraud itself a fraud. For international delegates the vote was (excluding three states, where the returns were suppressed, but which would not alter the results), Left Wing candidates: John Reed, 17,235; Louis C. Fraina, 14,124; C. E. Ruthenberg, 10,773; A. Wagenknecht, 10,650; I. E. Ferguson, 6,490—Right Wing candidates: Victor L. Berger, 4,871; Seymour Stedman, 4,729; Adolph Germer, 4,622; Oscar Ameringer, 3,184; J. L. Engdahl, 3,510; John M. Work, 2,664; A. I. Shiplacoff, 2,346; James Oneal, 1,895; Algernon Lee, 1,858. Louis B. Boudin, who was pro-war and against the Bolshevik Revolution, secured 1,537 votes. The Left Wing elected 12 out of 15 members of the National Executive Committee. The moderates who had been dominant in the Socialist Party were overwhelmingly repudiated. Kate Richards O'Hare (supported by the Left Wing, although not its candidate) defeated Hillquit for International Secretary, 13,262 to 4,775.

The N. E. C., after these desperate acts and after refusing to make public the vote on the referendum to affiliate with the Communist International, decided to retain office until the convention of August 30, although constitutionally it should have retired on June 30.

The issue was now definite. No compromise was conceivable. Events were directly making for a split and the organization of a new party. The Old Guard was concerned with retaining control of the Socialist Party organization, even if minus the bulk of the membership; the Left Wing was concerned with the principles and tactics.

5. The National Left Wing Conference and After

Just prior to the session of the National Executive Committee, Local Boston, Local Cleveland and the Left Wing Section of the Socialist Party of New York City, issued a call for a National Left Wing Conference, which met in New York City on June 21. The Conference was composed of 94 delegates representing 20 states, and coming overwhelmingly from the large industrial centers, the heart of the militant proletarian movement.

There was a difference of opinion in the Conference as to whether a Communist Party should be organized immediately, or whether the struggle should be carried on within the Socialist Party until the emergency convention August 30. The proposal to organize a new party immediately was defeated, 55 to 38. Thereupon 31 delegates, consisting mostly of the Federation comrades and the delegates of the Socialist Party of Michigan, determined to withdraw from the Conference. The majority in the Conference decided to participate in the Socialist Party emergency convention, all expelled and suspended locals to send contesting delegates; but issued a call for a convention September 1 "of all revolutionary elements" to organize a Communist Party together with delegates seceding from the Socialist Party convention.

(Continued next week)

THE WORKER IN STEEL

(Continued from Page 2)

while a third plant reported a decrease of about 11%, affecting approximately 50% of the employees. A 10% decrease, which affected three-eighths of the employees, was made by one concern, and about 1% of the force in one plant were decreased approximately 9%. Three plants reported percentage decreases of 6, 5 and 3, affecting one-third of the employees, 10% of the force and about 50% of the employees, respectively.—(July Monthly Review, p. 137.)

May 15 to June 15: One establishment gave the entire force an increase of 15%. The hot mill tonnage men in one plant received an increase of 3½%. One concern granted a small general increase. Respective decreases of 19.6% and 11.7%, affecting the puddle-mill and the finishing-mill workers, or 45% of the employees, were reported by one establishment. One plant decreased the tonnage men in the bar and sheet departments 17½% and 12½%, respectively. A decrease of about 6%, affecting about 3½% of the employees, was made by one establishment.—(August Monthly Review, p. 172.)

The steel strike is all the commentary that is needed in connection with these facts. Against all the determined and ruthless efforts of the steel exploiters against unionism, enough progress has finally been made for the calling of this strike. The desire for human existence will carry the workers to the next fight, and then to the next.

International Mass Meeting

Auspices of the Communist Party of America

TO PROTEST AGAINST THE MILITARY INVASION AND MARTIAL LAW AT GARY

Tuesday, Oct. 14, 8 P. M. Car Men's Hall, Ashland & Van Buren

Workers, unite against the suppression of Strikes by Military Force. Stand by the workers of Gary in their struggle against the capitalist class. Come in thousands and show your solidarity.

ADMISSION FREE.